



BRISTOL BULLETIN

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Bristol Temple Meads On 1st June, Class 69 locos 69004 + 69003 became the first Class members to work each way over the Bristol – Taunton mainline and appear in Temple Meads station when arriving in platform 10, early at 00.49 top n' tailing 3Q00 23.25 (Wed) Exeter Riverside – Exeter Riverside (via Temple Meads) weed-killing train with a wagon consist of KFAs TIPH95486/VTG95378/TIPH93470. The train departed at 02.42 on the return and following another Temple Meads visit during the following morning the working covered the Weston-super-Mare loop on the return, pausing at the south end of the station at signals from 03.59 until 04.52.

On 3 June 47813 top & tailed 57313 on:1Z47 06:30 Swansea to Truro, Northern Belle "Historic Truro at Leisure", A4 60007 top & tailed with Scotrail 47712 on:1Z27 06:30 Slough to Kingswear "English Riviera Express"

On 8 June 5L46 09:57 Laira T&RSMD to Ely Papworth Sidings 37510 with 6330 barrier hauling: 49107 + 48125 + 48115 + 43170.

On 12 June 55009 0Z55 11:13 Bishops Lydeard to Barrow Hill from the WSR Diesel Gala.

On 21 June 1Z54 16:55 Paignton - Chester "The English Riviera Pullman" worked by 43059 + 43046.

On 24 June 7029 and 47773 worked 1Z10 06:08 Birmingham Snow Hill - Bishops Lydeard' 37521+37688 top n' tail 47828 with 0550 Shrewsbury - Kingswear 'English Riviera Express', D1935(47805)+ 47614 (47853) worked 1Z64 05:22 Solihull – Penzance and 69005+69006 double head 1Z69 0550 Shrewsbury - Penzance 'Mazey Day Special'. On 23rd June, Peter Watts named GBRf Class 69 No. 69006 at Gloucester to celebrate his 50th anniversary in the railtour industry.

As it was, a surprised Peter drew back the curtains to reveal the name 'Pathfinder Railtours' along with a sub-plate stating, 'Peter Watts 50 years service 1973-2023'.

Severn Beach Branch line New livery and named 'Safety Task Force' Colas HST power car 43277 arrived in the terminus at 00.53 working the monthly test train run from Derby TC - Paddington with second power car 43274 and coaches 975974. 977997. 72639. 975091. 9481. With the second power car now leading, the train was later seen passing Avonmouth station at 01.15 heading back to Bristol. 2023 marked the 25th Anniversary of the very first HST visit to Severn Beach when 43124 + 43137 were used on a Hertfordshire's 'Severn Vales' rail-tour from Paddington on 3rd January 1998, but it was not for another 15 years until the next HST appearance, this being the first of the now near monthly HST test train visits (with 43014 and 43062) on 8th May 2013.

Portbury Branch line 70001 was a rare visitor over the line on 3rd June working 4V35 08.15 (SO) London Gateway – Portbury Auto-terminal loaded containers but having passed Parsons Street at 13.05 did not reach its destination until some four hours later, the train being noted stopped in the Avon Gorge (beneath the Clifton Suspension Bridge) for most of that time, the reason was unknown. This Class 70 loco, which had replaced the main train loco assumed to be the usual Class 66 somewhere en route, is thought to have been making a debut appearance at Portbury as was a member of the Freightliner Intermodal fleet at the time when Heavy-haul Class 70s were working the imported power station coal trains. 66593 was on the Mondays only 4L35 05.35 return to London Gateway (often worked by the Saturday inward loco) which passed Pill Village at 05.40 formed with empty flats, instead of the Class 70 which had remained stabled at Stoke Gifford sidings. On 10th June, the train operated as 4V34 11.15 from Southampton Maritime with 66506, whilst on 15th 37612 + 37254 were line visitors top n' tailing the monthly 'high speed' test train (which was worked by HST power cars for the April visit) passing Clifton Bridge down at 08.30 and Ashton Vale Road crossing at 09.42 on the return with departmental coaching stock; 977974. 72631. 975091. 5995. 37254 was the loco damaged near Sandstone no.3 tunnel further along the line having collided with a fallen tree earlier in the year whilst leading the same train.

Bath Spa On 10 June GBRF Staff Charter 1Z60 08:07 Ashford International to Weston-super-Mare, and D345 (40145) T+T 47815 1Z41 16:36 Weymouth- Burton on Trent

Bristol TM The former Motorail Siding next to P2 has been shortened by 95m to allow a safe walking route from the Fish Dock compound. This is in connection with the refurbishment of the main trainshed roof including rewiring and the replacement of all glazing. Completion is now extended from summer 2024 until Jan 2027. A buffer stop has been placed on the track and the remaining length of 90m allows stabling of a 3-car Class 166 DMU.

Ashley Down Work began on the new station during a 15-day closure of the Relief Lines from Sat 3 until Sat 17 June (inclusive), working round the clock. The impact was on local services between Filton Abbey Wood (where only P3 & 4 were available) and Bristol Temple Meads, which normally call at Stapleton Road or Lawrence Hill, as they don't have platforms on the Main Lines which were operational. They were still served by Temple Meads to Avonmouth/Severn Beach trains which were unaffected. Passengers were advised to travel via Temple Meads and double back.

Sharpness Branch Network Rail has advised that this 3¾ mile branch is no longer available for passenger trains. The most recent train of low-level nuclear waste to Sellafield left Berkeley CEGB terminal on the branch was in March. They are shown running to Sharpness Docks (loop) on arrival from Crewe to run round to propel into the terminal, departing straight out.

Portbury The Ship Autosun (Vehicles Carrier) docked at Portbury on 27 June, after sailing over from Spain, with first of class 93001 on board.

Marsh Barton GWR have announced that Marsh Barton station will open from Tuesday 4 July. Marsh Barton will provide fast, congestion-free journeys into one of Exeter's largest employment areas as well as Riverside Valley Park.

Bristol Area Railtours and Visiting Excursions (Provided in good faith, but not guaranteed accurate!)

| Date | Tour | Destination | Haulage | Pick-up | Fare | Operator |
|------------|-----------------|-------------|------------------|----------|------|----------|
| Sat 8 Jul | English Riviera | Kingswear | 47, 60007 | TM 09.45 | FULL | Saphos |
| Thu 13 Jul | Welsh Marches | Shrewsbury | 47, 60007 | TM 09.10 | £165 | Saphos |
| Thu 27 Jul | Welsh Marches | Shrewsbury | 47, 60007 | TM 09.10 | £165 | Saphos |
| Sun 30 Jul | Royal Duchy | Par | 46233 | TM 09.00 | £134 | RYTC |

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|------------|-----------------|-------------------------|-------------|----|---------|
| Wed 12 Jul | English Pullman | Victoria-Salisbury-Bath | 13.05/15.50 | 67 | Belmond |
| Wed 26 Jul | English Pullman | Victoria-Salisbury-Bath | 13.05/15.50 | 67 | Belmond |

Dates for your Diary

8/9 July S&D Railway Midsomer Norton – Wickham Trolley Weekend.
A chance to travel the whole line in two Wickham Trolleys - B40W and visiting smaller W4165.

7/8/9 July GWSR Diesel Gala – Locos booked to work: 20137, 24081, 25309, 37215, 37248, 45149, 47105, 47376. There is a connecting bus between Cheltenham Spa and the Racecourse Stations.

Outdoor Fixtures

Wednesday 12 July - Observation afternoon Oxford & evening Didcot Station

Wednesday 2 August – Midweek lunchtime visit to the Avon Valley Railway
Meet up to ride or photograph trains and enjoy lunch in the buffet.
Round trips depart at 10.45, 12.00, 13.15, 14.30, & 15.45.

Fri 1 Sep – ‘My 49 Year Railway Career’ – A first visit to the branch by Dennis Flood.